

## BOOK REVIEWS

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**CURIOSA. A MISCELLANY OF CLINICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES.** By William St. Clair Symmers, Senior. (Pp. xv+208. Figs. 67. £3.75). London: Bailliere Tindall, 1974.

THIS book by a graduate of this medical school and a Fellow of this Society, who is now Professor of Histopathology at Charing Cross Hospital Medical School, is a fascinating record of interesting clinical and pathological experiences. The conditions described are rare or presented in some unusual way, but the author has been able to indicate something of general value and interest in nearly all. While many of the conditions will rarely be encountered by the practitioner they are all described in a fascinating manner and read like short essays in detection. Some of the commoner conditions are described because of associated unusual and interesting features and there are cautionary tales of short-comings and deficiencies by both pathologists and clinicians. The experienced pathologist will be aware of the rarer conditions, but will not have encountered them all and may wonder if he has failed on occasions to recognise some of them.

Professor Symmers is to be congratulated on the care with which he has collected and recorded interesting clinical and pathological cases over a professional lifetime. Some of the cases described go back to his student days in Belfast. All experienced practitioners, physicians and surgeons as well as the trained pathologist will appreciate these accounts of experiences beyond the usual, but perhaps only those who really accept that "common conditions occur most often" should read the book lest their judgement in differential diagnosis be beguiled by these fascinating records.

J.E.M.

**SURGERY IN INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD.** By Wallace M. Dennison and Teaching Colleagues in the Glasgow Medical School. Third Edition. (Pp. 618, Illustrated. £5.00). Edinburgh and London: Churchill Livingstone. 1974.

THIS book is written primarily for family doctors, senior medical students and junior hospital staff. The third edition has been largely rewritten and expanded without losing the clarity of style which made previous editions popular. Mr. Dennison is now joined by 19 colleagues in the Glasgow Medical School so that all aspects of paediatric surgery receive careful attention. The reader will find a lucid presentation of basic information without burdensome details. As the book is not intended for paediatric surgeons there are only brief descriptions of treatment. There are particularly helpful sections dealing with surgery of the newborn, elective surgery and cancer and radiotherapy in childhood. Illustrations are plentiful and clear and are particularly good in the sections dealing with the developmental anomalies and orthopaedic conditions. Each chapter concludes with a short selected bibliography which will be useful for those seeking more detailed information.

It is a little disappointing that it has not been possible to include the more recently accepted views on the treatment of spina bifida, particularly in regard to the need for selection of patients for treatment. It is no longer generally accepted that immediate closure of the back has any significant effect in preventing deterioration of function in the lower limbs.

This volume presents the reader with a clear, easy text in paediatric surgery and can be recommended.

B.T.S.